

April 8, 2021

Representative Marvin Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support of H5672

Dear Chairman Abney,

On behalf of HousingWorks RI at Roger Williams University, I write to offer strong support of H5672 proposed legislation entitled "Rhode Island Child Care is Essential Act."


HousingWorks RI at Roger Williams University is a respected source of information about housing in Rhode Island. We conduct research and analyze data to inform public policy, develop communications strategies, and promote dialogue about the relationship between housing and the state's economic future and improved health and educational outcomes.

The average Rhode Islander must spend more than half of their income on housing and child-care. According to the Economic Policy Institute, Rhode Islanders paying for infant care pay the 13th most expensive child-care costs out of all states plus the District of Columbia. The nearly \$14,000 cost of child-care makes up 20.5% of the median Rhode Island family's income and 62.7% of a minimum wage worker's income. To make matters worse, the HUD recommendation for people to not spend more than thirty percent of income on housing is often not feasible: a Rhode Islander with the state's median annual income can only affordably buy a house in one community, while the Rhode Islander earning the median renter's income cannot affordably rent in any community.

H5672 will help alleviate these Rhode Islanders' financial burdens. Capping the Child Care Assistance Program at seven-percent of family's income would not only align with the federally recommended standard, but also save many Rhode Islanders over \$8,500 to spend on housing and bolster our economy. The bill's expansion of CCAP eligibility and increase in reimbursement rates would further help Rhode Island parents and Rhode Island as a whole.

For these reasons, I support H5672 and urge you to as well. Thank you for your consideration, and should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 401.254.4815.

Respectfully,



Brenda Clement
Director